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Navy Surgeon General Honors Hospital Corps' 116th Birthday

Filed under CORPSMAN, LEADERSHIP, U.S. NAVY

(2 COMMENTS)

By Vice Adm. Matthew L. Nathan, U.S. Navy surgeon general, and chief, U.S. Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery



On behalf of Navy Medicine, I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to the Navy Hospital Corps as they celebrate 116 years of unwavering dedication and service.

Since June 17, 1898, when President William McKinley signed an act of Congress, establishing the Hospital Corps, the Corps has grown exponentially in size and stature from the original 25 senior apothecaries appointed by the Secretary of the Navy.

Today, we honor their bravery, brilliance and sacrifice when serving in harm's way to protect the lives of our Sailors and Marines. From the

Revolutionary War to the current overseas contingency operations, corpsmen have served with valor and gallantly answered the call, "Corpsman up!" as they tend to the sick and injured on the sea, under the sea, in the air and on battlefields worldwide. No Marine has ever taken a hill without a corpsman by his side. And when they do, they take solace in knowing that "Doc" is beside them.

From the first Hospital Corps School at Naval Hospital Portsmouth in 1902, to our extensive training programs today at our Medical Education Training Command in Fort Sam Houston, Texas, corpsmen are learning razor-sharp life-saving skills. Because of their exceptionalness and their extensive training, we are experiencing the lowest battle mortality and non-battle injury rates in the history of armed conflict. This is unprecedented and something that the Hospital Corps should be extremely proud of.

The Hospital Corps is the largest and most decorated rating in the Navy, achieving 22 Medals of Honor among many other awards. Twenty naval ships have been named in honor of hospital corpsmen. Since 1919, 178 corpsmen have been awarded the Navy Cross. In the Vietnam War alone, hospital corpsmen received four Medals of Honor, 31 Navy Crosses, 127 Silver Stars, and 291 Bronze Stars for heroics under fire, a testament to the quality of character of the men and women that wear the caduceus and answer to "Doc".

Today, we honor their bravery in battle; their compassion during humanitarian assistance/disaster response efforts; their willingness to help those in need; and their superb


Navy Medicine Video


Navy Medicine is a global healthcare network of 63,000 Navy medical personnel around the world who provide high quality health care to more than one million eligible beneficiaries. Navy Medicine personnel deploy with Sailors and Marines worldwide, providing critical mission support aboard ship, in the air, under the sea and on the battlefield.

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performance at our medical treatment facilities across the globe. They have ensured our nation has a fit and medically ready fighting force, while providing compassionate patient and family-centered health care.

To the more than 25,000 active duty and reserve corpsmen around the world, I thank you for your service, courage, and commitment for the work you do every day. Happy birthday Hospital Corps!

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Brian Pederson
Thanks for the memories! HMC (SW) USN Retired 1967-1993

Arthur Taylor
Spent over 20 great years in the Hospital Corps. HMCM(SW) USN retired (former CMC of the USS NICHOLSON and NAVHOSP, Millington, TN

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